

## Jasper Country Animal Control Board

### Public Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2015

Chairperson Pauline Boring called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Members in attendance were: Pauline Boring, Pat Williamson, Del Cleek, Loretta Sipkema, Marissha Mathews and Janice Mallory. Shelter Director Mark Sinclair and Shelter employee Abbey Todd were in attendance. Approximately 15 citizens were in attendance also.

Pauline stated that citizens wishing to speak should complete a Public Comments form that was sent around. Many did not return the form.

Pauline stated that the November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting minutes had been e-mailed for review. Loretta moved to accept the minutes as presented in the e-mail; Marisha seconded and the minutes were approved.

Mark Sinclair had e-mailed his Director's report with the exception of the financial reports which were handed out. There were no questions. Pauline commented that the monies allotted in the 2015 budget had been utilized and she is looking into the carry over to 2016. Mark stated that the part-time ACO quit at the beginning of the month and that he had approval to hire a new person. He and Abbey attended chemical immobilization training and that the tranquilizer guns were inspected by the Sheriff's department and are ready to use if needed. Mark stated that the response to calls has been 100% since he came on board. He and Abbey will be going to KV Elementary and Middle Schools to pick up donations. There were no questions with regards to the report.

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### **Old Business:**

Volunteer Policy: This has been discussed previously and Pauline had handed policy draft at last meeting. Loretta moved to recommend to the commissioners to adopt the policy. Pat seconded and the motion passed.

Live Trap Policy: Del has been in touch with the Indiana Animal Board of Health and handed out copies of the St. Joe County Trap Rental Agreement and the Washington County animal trap form. Jennifer Strasser, DVM District 1 Field Veterinarian had hoped to attend this meeting, but was unable to. She hopes to make a meeting soon to meet the board. Members of the audience say that you can't trap Ferrell cats during the day. They are out at night. Del stated that there is a Ferrell cat organization called [www.themeowmission.org](http://www.themeowmission.org) that will help trap cats. Pauline stated that dealing with rental fees and deposits will have to be run through the commissioners. The matter was tabled until further information is obtained.

Dr. Mallory stated that she has received the animal control ordinances from St. Joe and Mishawaka.

Owner Surrender Fee: Pauline stated that she feels that a fee would make citizens accountable for the care of that pet they are surrendering. Owner surrender outweighs strays coming into the shelter. Some of the surrounding counties do so. Citizens in attendance voiced concerns that this causes people to just abandon those pets. Pauline recognized their comments as valid concerns. The issue was tabled until further information could be found. She reiterated that it wasn't about making money but about accountability.

Verification of Rabies/Spay/Neuter Procedure (status): Mark handed out log. The board and shelter are trying to be more proactive and it was reported that 17 have recently been verified. In the past the shelter has been lax in verifying adoptions have received shots and neutering. Citizen Glory Redmond stated that some rescues take the animal straight to the vet. Abbey stated that would work if they use local vets. It would have to be structured that local vets be used.

Restructure Shelter Staff: Citizen William Spalding stated that the public and social media are concerned that the shelter is hemorrhaging staff. He wants a Standard Operating Procedure. Pauline stated that it is our hope that an SOP will be completed by the end of the winter. Pauline thanked him for his comments and proceeded with her recommendation. We are budgeted for two full-time people. Two part-time; one as weekend and one as shelter help but is now ACO. The bulk of the workload is at the shelter. 79% of animals were brought to the shelter. 21% were from calls outside the shelter. We need someone there for the incoming animals, taking care of the animals that are there. Too many times that when we are out on service call and the shelter gets closed. Recommend that we stay with the full-time Senior Animal Control Officer/Director (responsible for 100% of shelter's activity); have another full-time person as a Shelter Manager- in charge of the books, computer records, administrative work (relieving the director to do more in the field, educating the public etc.), and be there to take calls (dispatch); Have a part-time Animal Control Officer to assist the full-time to help take on call; keep the weekend kennel assistance (which we are budgeted for through 2016). Discussion ensued. Pauline stated that the primary goal of this board is animal control. We are doing our best. Criticizing our personnel does not assist the board. The board would hope that citizens will work with us so that we can protect the public and animals. Del moved to recommend restructuring as outlined to the commissioners, Loretta seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **New Business:**

ACO Training; Euthanasia Training/Certification and Adoption vs. Rescue: Pauline stated that in June 2016 there will be training offered in Indianapolis by two different organizations. Mark will talk to other counties about where they obtain training and Pauline will put together a spreadsheet comparing the two different training being offered. Training was tabled until further information is obtained. Mark will outline the adoption procedure for further review also.

**Public Comment:**

William Spalding spent several minutes explaining that he surrendered a cat he had been caring for and that the AC staff came to his home to pick up. They did not have a carrier and the cat got away. He had a carrier but did not offer it and the cat has since come back and he will give to a rescue. His complaint was that they did not have a carrier and he was assured by Mark that they would not go on a call without making sure a carrier is on board the truck.

Glory Redmond complained that the Director is not working with the rescues. Pauline suggested that Mark get together with Glory etc. and make contact. Pauline took personal exception with the social media post that our shelter wasn't cooperating. Pauline personally has tried to coordinate and help. Some of the audience does not feel that a pay raise should be forthcoming for the director because of his lack of experience. Much discussion ensued. Del reiterated that Mark has to be given a chance to get things done.

With no other business to discuss, Jan moved to adjourn the meeting and Loretta seconded. All agreed and the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

The next meeting will be January 11, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the Rensselaer Branch of the Jasper County Library.

Minutes submitted by:

Del Cleek

Animal Control Board Secretary